



MassDOT: Easthampton's Manhan Bridge to reopen on Thursday, 5 weeks ahead of schedule

manhan massdot pic.jpg

Work on Easthampton's Manhan Bridge has been completed about five weeks ahead of schedule, according to MassDOT spokeswoman Sara Lavoie. The bridge is slated to reopen at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 24, 2013, Lavoie said. (*MassDOT*)

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EASTHAMPTON — Money talks.

And *talk* of a \$100,000 contractor bonus for overhauling the aging **Manhan Bridge** ahead of schedule helped propel the \$3.75 million project over the finish line sooner than expected.

The **Massachusetts Transportation Department** has announced that the Route 10 bridge spanning the Manhan River will reopen on Thursday, about five weeks earlier than anticipated.

MassDOT officials tweeted the good news on Wednesday, pleasing the city's mayor and many local business owners, some of whom claim the closure hurt their bottom lines over the past few months.

Transportation officials had originally said the bridge would be shut for six months, from June 3 to Dec. 3. But the bulk of the work by Northern Construction Service was completed in about 4½ months.

As a result, the bridge is slated to reopen at 3:30 p.m. today, according to MassDOT spokeswoman **Sara Lavoie**.

"Using accelerated construction techniques and extended work hours, MassDOT and its contractor are pleased to open the bridge to vehicles approximately five weeks ahead of schedule," Lavoie said in a statement.



The Manhan Bridge in Easthampton got some finishing touches, including new traffic markings, earlier this week in preparation of its debut today, Thursday, Oct. 24, 2013. The bridge had been closed since early June.

John Suchocki | The Republican

The 62-year-old bridge was deemed structurally deficient and added to the state's short list of accelerated bridge projects.

The Manhan Bridge was rebuilt using precast, prestressed concrete deck T-beams, a construction process that reduces the amount of time required to complete such a span. The beams were built and cured off site, then trucked in for installation.

Northern Construction, with offices in Palmer and Weymouth, was contractually obligated to reopen the bridge within 180 days. If the company had failed to do so, it would have faced daily fines of more than \$3,300 for each additional day of work.

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